

10/580282

1020 Rec'd PCT/US 23 MAY 2005

CLAIMS:

1. Vehicle roof structure (10) having at least one rear-side convertible top compartment lid (16) and a rigid roof part (12) that is movable between an opened- and a closed position, which roof part (12) extends in the closed position between a windshield frame (14) of the vehicle and the convertible top compartment lid (16) and in the opened position is stored in a space underneath the convertible top compartment lid (16), wherein the roof part (12) is movable between the closed position and the opened position by a linkage mechanism (36) and at least one guide device (40, 42, 44) is additionally provided,

characterized in that,

the roof part (12) is in contact with the guide device (40, 42, 44) at one portion of its movement path between the opened- and closed position; the guide device (40, 42, 44) includes at least one guide element, which is borne on the convertible top compartment lid (16) or the vehicle body and arrives in engagement with a guide path (44) provided on the roof part when moving the roof part from the closed position into the opened position and moves in contact therewith, wherein a directional change of the movement path of the roof part (12) is effected when the guide device arrives in contact with the roof part.

2. Vehicle roof structure (10) according to claim 1,

characterized in that,

the guide device comprises at least one roller (40, 42).

3. Vehicle roof structure (10) according to claim 1 or 2,

characterized in that,

the guide device comprises a first and a second guide element, preferably two rollers (40, 42), that are borne on the convertible top compartment lid (16) displaced from each other, such that they each effect a directional change on the movement path of the roof part (12) when it moves from the closed position into the opened position.

4. Vehicle roof structure (10) according to claim 3,

characterized in that,

from the closed position to the opened position, the movement path of the roof part (12) comprises a first segment, in which the guide device is not in contact with the roof part, a second segment, in which the first guide element (40) is in contact with the guide path (44) of

the roof part (12), and a third segment, in which the second guide element (42) is in contact with the guide path (44) of the roof part (12) and the first guide element (40) is not in contact with the guide path (44) of the roof part.

5. Vehicle roof structure (10) according to claim 3 or 4,

characterized in that,

the guide path (44) is formed by an ornamental strip mounted on the surface of the roof part.

6. Vehicle roof structure (10) according to one of the preceding claims,

characterized in that,

the linkage mechanism (30) comprises a rotatably-borne connecting rod assembly, which is mounted on the vehicle body side, having two connecting rods (31, 34) that are rotatable with respect to each other and a biasing device (35), wherein the rotational axis of the connecting rods with respect to each other and the rotational axis of the connecting rod assembly extends essentially in parallel with respect to the vehicle body and wherein the connecting rods (31, 34) are oriented with respect to each other in a predetermined first angular position ($\alpha 1$) by the biasing device (35) and are moved against the biasing influence of the biasing device by the contact of the guide device (40, 42, 44) with the roof part into a second angular position ($\alpha 2$, $\alpha 3$, $\alpha 4$).

7. Vehicle roof structure (10) according to claim 6,

characterized in that,

the connecting rod assembly (31, 34) is additionally borne in a linearly displaceable manner with respect to the vehicle body.

8. Vehicle roof structure (10) according to one of the preceding claims,

characterized in that,

the linkage mechanism (30, 36) includes a connecting rod connected with the convertible top compartment lid, which connecting rod is connected with the guide device (40, 42, 44) such that the guide device effects a corresponding pivoting movement of the roof part (12) during a closing movement of the convertible top compartment lid (16).

9. Vehicle roof structure (10) according to one of the preceding claims,

characterized in that,

the roof part (12) is divided into a plurality of contiguous areas (22, 24) such that, by displacement of areas, it is variable between a reduced width and a normal width and it is movable in the reduced width between its opened- and closed position.

10. Vehicle having a vehicle roof structure (10) according to one of the preceding claims.